

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 11755 201100Z  
ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 EUR-12 H-01 INR-07  
IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05  
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05  
NRC-05 OES-07 /107 W  
-----117722 201347Z /50

R 200730Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5522  
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 11755

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: TECH, IN  
SUBJECT: INDIAN AEC CHAIRMAN SETHNA ON NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

REF: BOMBAY 1994 (NOTAL)

1. SETHNA TOLD CONSUL GENERAL COURTNEY IN BOMBAY EARLIER THIS WEEK THAT RECENT INDIAN PRESS REPORTS ON NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS PORTEND DIFFICULTIES UG AND GOI WILL FACE IN TRYING TO RECONCILE THEIR APPROACHES ON NON-PROLIFERATION ISSUE. HE CHARACTERIZED A REPORT IN THE CONGRESS PARTY'S NATIONAL HERALD (NEW DELHI 11234) AS AN "INSPIRED" STORY DESIGNED TO DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN HIM AND OTHER NUCLEAR SCIENTISTS. SETHNA ARGUED, HOWEVER, THAT THE REAL DIFFERENCES ARE POLITICAL, AND THAT DECISIONS ON SUCH BASICALLY POLITICAL ISSUES AS FULL SCOPE SAFEGUARDS WOULD BE MADE BY POLITICAL LEADERS ON POLITICAL, NOT SCIENTIFIC, GROUNDS. POLITICIANS WERE TRYING TO PROVIDE A SCIENTIFIC FACADE FOR THEIR POLITICAL POSITIONS.

2. INFCEP. SETHNA SAID THAT AS THE DEBATE IN INDIA ON NUCLEAR POLICY PROCEEDS, HE EXPECTS MORE PERSONAL ATTACKS BUT DOES NOT INTEND TO LET THEM AFFECT HIS WHOLEHEARTED PARTICIPATION IN INFCEP AND IN BILATERAL TALKS WITH THE U.S. HE BELIEVES STRONGLY IN  
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THE WORLD'S NEED FOR THE APPLICATION OF NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND THINKS THAT IN VIEW OF CURRENT FEARS, EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS LIKE INFCEP AND OTHER INTER-GOVERNMENTAL DISCUSSIONS ARE ESSENTIAL TO FINDING A NEW PATH FORWARD. HE HOPES THAT OTHER PEOPLE WILL

SHARE HIS VIEW THAT IT IS BEST TO AVOID STAKING OUT EARLY POSITIONS ON FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES SO THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS CAN MOVE FORWARD

WITHOUT UNNECESSARY ACRIMONY.

3. SETHNA HOPED THAT WE WOULD SOON SET DATES FOR THE FIRST FULL SCALE INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF INFCEP. HE SAID HIS OCTOBER SCHEDULE IS ALREADY GETTING CROWDED AND MORE IMPORTANTLY THE EXERCISE NEEDS TO GET UNDER WAY IF THE U.S. HOPES FOR IT ARE TO BE REALIZED. HE SEES IT AS A USEFUL FORUM FOR EXPOSING OTHER COUNTRIES' ATTITUDES ON A LOT OF NUCLEAR ISSUES THAT ARE NOW DIVISIVE. HE OBVIOUSLY BELIEVES THAT IF INDIA IS TO CHANGE SOME OF ITS POSITIONS ON FUNDAMENTAL NUCLEAR ISSUES, THIS CAN BE DONE ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF BROAD INTERNATIONAL TRENDS WHICH HE WOULD HOPE TO SEE REFLECTED IN MEETINGS LIKE INFCEP.

4. SPENT FUEL STORAGE. SETHNA SAID THAT THE SPENT FUEL STORAGE PROBLEM THREATNED TO MAKE TARAPUR A MAJOR PUBLIC ISSUE. A CUTBACK IN POWER GENERATION (FROM 200 MW TO 140 MW) WILL PUT OFF THE NEXT REFUELING BY SIX WEEKS, BUT EVEN WITH THEBEST OF LUCK IN DESIGNING NEW STORAGE RACKS HE SEES LITTLE PROSPECT OF AVOIDING A MAJOR REDUCTION IN TARAPUR OPERATIONS SOMETIME LATE NEXT SPRING. HE FOUND THE NYE AND KIEFFER VISITS MOST USEFUL IN DAMPENING CRITICISM OF THE RESTRICTIONS ALREADY APPLIED AT TARAPUR AND BELIEVES THAT CONTINUING SIGNS OF U.S. ASSISTANCE IN MEETING THIS PROBLEM WILLHELP IN PRESERVING A GOOD ATMOSPHERE FOR FURTHER NON-PROLIFERATION TALKS  
GOHEEN

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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